

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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Crono file

DATE: November 13, 1979

SUBJECT: Monsanto Disposal Site Identified by Eckhardt Report in South Seattle

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4/8/14FROM: Neil Thompson *NET*

TO: Files

Thru: John J. Barich, III *J*

On Friday, November 2, 1979, Congressman Mike Lowery contacted EPA Region X about an unidentified hazardous waste site listed in the Eckhardt Report (Waste Disposal Site Survey) as being in south Seattle. News media also picked up the story causing a search for the location of the site.

On Monday, November 5, 1979, Mike Lowery's office was able to obtain from the Eckhardt Committee the name and location of the site and who reported the information to the Eckhardt Committee. With this new information EPA was able to begin evaluation of the site and its potential as being an imminent hazard.

The site was identified as Kenworth Truck Company, Inc., located at 8801 East Marginal Way South, Seattle. The site was reportedly owned by Monsanto Chemical Co. during the time of waste disposal. Subsequently the property was sold to Kenworth Trucks and is currently used by them for parking and outside storage. Kenworth is a fabrication plant for large diesel trucks.

I contacted Mr. Bob Hauk, Safety Manager, for the Kenworth Truck Company on Monday afternoon. He had no knowledge of the disposal site but would contact some of the long-time employees about the question. He was unavailable for a visit on Monday.

Monday afternoon (3:47 p.m.) I arrived at the area of the disposal site. Since Bob Hauk was unavailable, I did not enter the property which is fenced and secure. Much of the plant site is visible from East Marginal Way South and photos were taken of those portions of Kenworth visible from the road.

The area seen was either paved parking lots or buildings. No exposed areas of ground were apparent. The day shift was leaving at this time so the parking lots were not full.

The area behind the fabrication plant was not visible. This included the area adjacent to the Duwamish River. It was also difficult to identify the property boundaries since equipment was stored alongside the fences. It was assumed that the property lines extended from the street to the river with Monsanto Chemical to the south and the Boeing Company to the north.



I explained to Mr. Hauk that no apparent hazard existed in viewing the site. But at this time there was no information as to what the waste material dumped by Monsanto consisted of. I explained some of the general information I had learned from the DOE inspector for King County about the waste streams from Monsanto. Mr. Hank was told that he would be informed immediately if a health hazard existed somewhere on the Kenworth property.

Monsanto Chemical Company

On Tuesday, November 6, (11:30 a.m.), I contacted Mr. Tom McGann, Plant Manager, to obtain information concerning their alledged disposal practices between 1956-1962 particularly about the on-site disposal on property now owned by Kenworth Trucks. He explained that he did not have the information on hand but would contact their corporate offices to respond to questions about the Eckhardt report.

At 2:00 p.m., I was contacted by Mr. Jesse, the Monsanto Chemical Corp., St. Louis, MO. He explained the information Monsanto provided the Eckhardt Committee. Specifically information on the disposal site in question.

Monsanto information to the Eckhardt included the same waste going to two sites: South Seattle (Kenworth) and Tulalip Landfill. The solid waste material is a scale like material which is chipped off the reactor vessels used for extracting vanillin. The scale like material consists mainly of calcium carbonate and sodium carbonate with some trace inorganics including copper. The pH of the material is high (greater than 10).

Monsanto does not consider the material to be hazardous or dangerous to human health or the environment. The rock like material is relatively insoluble and the high pH keeps the trace material tied up. Since the closure of the Tulalip Landfill, the waste has been taken to a chemical waste landfill in Arlington, Oregon.

The actual location of the site was not defined but Monsanto stated that is was the area on which a parking lot has been built. In reviewing the Kenworth plan this information would locate the disposal site on the southeast corner of the Kenworth site near East Marginal Way South and south of the Kenworth offices. The site is now a 200 car paved parking lot for employees and is fenced and secure.

On the basis of this investigation to identify and characterize a waste disposal site the principal objective were met.

No imminent or substantial hazard was discovered during the investigation nor was any information provided to classify this site into such a category.

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Since the site was secure and there had been no complaints on record from the Kenworth site no immediate action was considered necessary.

On Tuesday, November 6, 1979, at 8:15 a.m., I met with Mr. Robert A Hauk, Safety Manager, Kenworth Truck Company, concerning the alledged disposal site on Kenworth property. He had, by this time, obtained information from long time employees and company records concerning the relationship with Monsanto. It was determined that many land trades and sales had occurred between the Kenworth Company and the two adjacent companies; The Boeing Company and Monsanto Chemical Company.

The area that was suspected by Kenworth was an area in the rear of the property which was not developed by Kenworth until after the time of the cessation of waste disposal on-site as reported by Monsanto. Hauk did not know when or if the back part of the property had belonged to Monsanto. The only clue was a gate in the fence between Monsanto and Kenworth, which Kenworth had no reason for installing.

I learned that Kenworth originally occupied the site in 1946 with the main fabrication building and some smaller buildings located along East Marginal Way. Since that time additional buildings were built on the site. The entire site is filled land according to Hauk: including the land adjacent.

It was in the late 60's when the rear (along the Duwamish) portion of the site became developed with buildings, shops, storage, and truck parking. Mr. Hauk did not know any construction problems or health problems that occurred as the result of development of this portion of the site. No reports of any hazardous material in the fill was documented.

Photos were taken of the areas along the property line fences and in the area along the Duwamish River. Views of the adjacent properties as seen from Kenworth were included.

It was noted from a tour of the Kenworth property that nearly all of the site was paved on covered with buildings and the entire areas served by a runoff collection system.

The portion of the site that was not paved had a good cover that allowed for lift truck use in a couple of storage areas.

Some barrel storage was located along the Duwamish but upon investigation indicated stock supplies of paint and fiber glass resins. No evidence of leakage or barrel damage was noted.